

## Iran says backs China's initiative on Ukraine crisis

Iran declared its support for an initiative offered by China to help settle the ongoing crisis in Ukraine, saying it is time for genuine diplomacy to be activated to end the conflict between Moscow and Kyiv. The Iranian Foreign Ministry made the remark in a statement issued on Sunday, two days after China released its initiative for putting an end to the Ukraine war, officially known as China's Position on the Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis, according to Press TV. China's initiative, among other points, urges respect for the sovereignty of all countries, stressing that conflict and war benefit no one and calling for the resumption of peace talks between Ukraine and Russia.

## Grossi's visit to Tehran and future of nuclear talks

Iran's foreign minister met with some European officials on Monday

on the sidelines of a UN Human Rights Council session in Geneva, and gave explanations about Iran's military cooperation with Russia to ease European concerns. These meetings will definitely not be ineffective in softening the European Union's stance. Mistrust between Iran and Europe, unprecedentedly deep over the past year, and the Ukraine war is a crucial issue for Europe. Efforts by the parties involved in the nuclear negotiations have not borne satisfactory results. Therefore, all parties, especially Iran and the U.S., are expected to adopt realistic approaches in order to reach a favorable deal. But the fact is that the conditions which led to the agreement of the JCPOA in 2015 no longer exist, and the benefits of the troubled deal have drastically diminished for both Iran and the U.S.

However, it seems that the parties have no alternative better than the JCPOA. They should either sign a new comprehensive agreement, which is not possible in the short term, while Iran and the U.S. are not ready for such an option, or they should completely abandon the JCPOA and implement Plan B. Between these two options, there can be a short-term solution, and that is a temporary agreement.

This means that the parties agree to put their activities and measures on hold for a certain period of time, for example, three or four months, so that the situation does not deteriorate, and then resume talks to resuscitate the JCPOA in a calmer environment.

# Iran: U.S. must be held accountable for unilateral coercive measures

### Political Desk

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian told the 52nd regular meeting of the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva that the United States administrations must be held to account for perpetrating the heinous crimes.

Addressing the meeting on Monday, Iran's top diplomat said that protection and promotion of human rights is a shared sentiment for all nations.

"No state or a group of states should entitle themselves to claim exclusive ownership or custody of human rights. Nor should any state coerce others into submitting to any self-styled interpretation of human rights," he added. For Iran, the foreign minister said, respect for 'human rights and dignity' is a core value that is deeply rooted in the national tradition and profoundly embedded in the Iranians' religious beliefs.

"We have worked tirelessly and constantly toward better protection and promotion of human rights and dignity. We

have learned throughout our long history that we should neither be disheartened nor distracted by the odds," the top diplomat stated.

Unilateral coercive measures (UCMs), as unlawful and inhumane as they are, systematically and flagrantly violate fundamental human rights of the targeted populations, Amir-Abdollahian said, adding that the United States administrations must be held to account for perpetrating the heinous crimes.

"Those European and other states that comply and over-comply with the U.S.' unilateral coercive measures should be accountable as accomplices in the crime. Neither of them has any moral high ground to talk about Iran's human rights. That's a sheer hypocrisy to advocate for the human rights of the Iranians while depriving the same people of their basic rights to health, to education, and to life," Iran's foreign minister highlighted. The United States alone, he added, is responsible for the bulk of systematic and grave human rights

violations as it ranks number one in terms of military aggressions and interventions, coup d'états, and economic embargoes against other countries.

### Meetings with counterparts

On the sidelines of the UN conference, the top Iranian diplomat held separate meetings with a number of his counterparts, including the foreign ministers of Finland, Belgium, and Armenia.

During a meetings, the Iranian foreign minister and his European counterparts talked about various issues, such as the relations between Iran and the European countries, negotiations on the Iran nuclear deal and removal of sanctions against Tehran, ways to end the war in Ukraine, cooperation between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency, and the unconstructive stances that the US and a number of Europeans adopted on the recent riots in Iran.

In his meeting with Belgian Foreign Minister Hadja Lahbib, Amir-Abdollahian



pointed to the wrong assessment of some European countries about the recent riots in Iran, and emphasized that bilateral relations and issues

should not be affected by these wrong calculations. He also said that Tehran is ready to solve the problem related to the prisoners of the two countries.



Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian gives a speech during the 52nd UN Human Rights Council session, in Geneva, on February 27, 2023.  
● FABRICE COFFRINI/AFP

Iran never distanced itself from negotiations: FM

## IAEA chief due in Tehran soon



● MEHR NEWS AGENCY

"If the American side acts realistically within the frame-work of the message it has sent and avoids repeating its previous hypocritical media remarks, we will not be far from an agreement," Amir-Abdollahian said. Iran's foreign minister added, "The problem, however, is that Americans always issue contradictory diplomatic and media messages. I mean, they send positive diplomatic messages while making different media remarks. We hope that [this time around] Americans would act realistically and avoid being hypocritical."

Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency have also continued their cooperation in recent weeks to remove some ambiguities about Iran's enrichment of uranium. Recently, a delegation from the UN nuclear agency visited Iran and held talks with Iran's nuclear officials. Now, spokesman of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) Behrouz Kamalvandi says IAEA chief Rafael Grossi is going to visit Tehran within the next few days at the formal invitation of AEOI chief Mohammad Eslami, according to Tasnim News Agency. Kamalvandi said that del-

egations from Iran and the UN nuclear agency, led by IAEA Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Safeguards Massimo Aparo, held "constructive and promising" negotiations during the past days. Kamalvandi expressed hope that the upcoming visit by Grossi would pave the way for brighter vistas for closer cooperation between Iran and the IAEA. He also noted that Iran is working in interaction and coordination with the IAEA and keeps trying to prevent the creation of new ambiguities in the course of cooperation with the UN nuclear agency.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi  
Cartoonist



## Raeisi: Iraq must not be used for threats against neighbors

The Iraqi official also held talks with a number of Iranian top military officials, including Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Baqeri. The Iranian official said Iran and Iraq are boosting security cooperation to ensure regional security and counter "common threats". "The situation in the region requires that Iran and Iraq work together to ensure security because the two

countries are facing common threats," he said. World powers, he continued, created the Daesh terrorist group to wrest control from regional states, but the plot failed due to cooperation between the Iranian and Iraqi nations and warriors. The top general also said many Iranians were martyred in the path of bringing about security for Iraq. He described General Qassem Soleimani and Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, senior

Iranian and Iraqi anti-terror commanders who were assassinated by the U.S. in 2020, as a symbol of the Tehran-Baghdad unity and brotherhood. The Iraqi official also held separate meetings with Iran's Army Chief Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi, Iran's Defense Minister Brigadier General Mohammad Reza Gharaei Ashtiani, and Chief Commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Major General Hossein Salami.